



**Ambulance Paramedics  
& Emergency Dispatchers**  
of British Columbia - CUPE 873

# Ambulance Paramedics

**Community  
Solutions in  
Metropolitan  
Communities**



## BC Paramedics & Dispatchers

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**A key part of BC's healthcare and public safety system and a valuable resource to your community.**

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- ➔ **The Problem:** Expanding populations and higher call volumes mean higher demands on the healthcare system and ambulance service.
- ➔ **The Challenges:** Limited healthcare budgets have not allowed paramedic services levels to keep up to demand.
- ➔ **The Solution:** More paramedics and expanded roles for community paramedics in metropolitan and urban areas can help reduce 911 call volumes.

### Did you know?

The entry to practice levels of paramedicine are changing. By 2025 the entry to practice vision is that all paramedics will be at a degree level.

Paramedicine has advanced to a point that is requiring increased education and responsibility. The baccalaureate entry to practice is a step towards further integration into the health care system.

Ask us for more details.



## Metropolitan Based Community Paramedicine Program Expansion

Since 2017 the Community Paramedicine (CP) program has rolled out 100 Community Paramedics in over 90 communities across B.C. It has been very successful at building close relationships with members of the community. The Ambulance Paramedics of B.C. (APBC) feel it is time for the CP program to come to metropolitan areas. The benefits of a Community Paramedicine program in a metro area are wide ranging.

- ➔ It provides direct medical access to our most vulnerable and high-risk populations such as individuals affected by the opioid epidemic, homeless and low-income patients, elderly patients and individuals with chronic medical conditions.
- ➔ It allows paramedics to continue to build on the relationships and trust with community members they have already developed as front-line care professionals.
- ➔ It improves access to medical care by bringing care directly to the patient in their own home or on the street.
- ➔ It provides outreach and friendly faces for those in need.
- ➔ It reduces emergency room visits and calls to 911 providing care in the patient's own home.

### **Paramedics – The right resource for patients, in the right amount of time**

BC Paramedics are multifaceted medical experts in the pre-hospital setting. Their extensive education positions them well to tackle health care gaps in your community.

APBC supports an evidenced based approach to delivering paramedic services. Evidence shows that trained paramedics and quick transport to hospital saves lives. More paramedic resources are required to improve timely access to high quality paramedic care.

While we are advocating for additional paramedic resources, we also need to ensure that our existing resources are utilized properly.

That means recognizing that while all paramedic response times are important, there must be a focus on getting to life-threatening situations as quick as possible.

To ensure paramedics are getting to these situations, the BCEHS has implemented the Clinical Response Model (CRM) to classify medical 911 call urgency levels.

Since implementation, CRM has resulted in significantly faster response times to the most urgent calls, while response times to other calls slightly improved or stayed the same.





# Today's Challenges for Metropolitan Communities

**A successful health care system requires a robust and adequately resourced paramedic service. Ensuring paramedics are able to meet the needs of BC communities will ensure the health of British Columbians.**



Municipalities should not feel the need to duplicate services that should be provided by the BC Emergency Health Service. Most larger BC communities are facing challenges with overcrowding and availability of local healthcare services.

Population growth in urban and metropolitan communities continues above the national average, which means more 911 calls and more patients in hospitals. Other pressures, like the ongoing pandemic, the opioid epidemic, the effects of climate change and natural disasters (wildfires, floods) add to the demands on the system.

All these factors mean that timely access to high-quality pre-hospital paramedic services is more important than ever.

In larger centers, paramedic and dispatch services are stretched to a maximum workload capacity. Paramedics working in high-workload environments are experiencing high levels of stress-related injuries, like PTSD. This leads to high levels of sick time and long-term injury. We must ensure we are providing adequate care and preventative measures to protect the well-being of the paramedics and dispatchers who care for our communities.

## Getting Involved in the Solution

Municipal representatives have a critical role in the decisions being made about healthcare services in your community. You know the needs of your community better than anyone else. We welcome the opportunity to discuss your community's specific healthcare needs, gaps and paramedic services. Contact us by email: [info@apbc.ca](mailto:info@apbc.ca). We ask that you write to the Health Minister to advocate for enhanced paramedic services and healthcare in your community.

We ask that you highlight

- ➔ Your unique community issues.
- ➔ Your concerns about paramedic and dispatcher workloads and well-being.
- ➔ Your support for new programs like Community Paramedicine.
- ➔ Share this with other community leaders.
- ➔ Stay current and follow Ambulance Paramedics of BC



**Want To Know More?** If you'd like to learn more about these programs, please visit [www.apbc.ca](http://www.apbc.ca)